



Name \_\_\_\_\_

**10****John Adams Defends British Soldiers**

In 1768, England sent troops to Boston to help collect taxes on tea, glass, paint, lead, and paper. They were ordered to guard the building where taxes were collected. On March 5, 1770, a loud and angry mob of sailors and workingmen rioted in front of that building. The soldiers opened fire only after they were insulted, hit with snowballs, and threatened with violence. Five men in the mob were killed, and six others were injured. The colonists were very angry. They called it a **massacre**, even though only a few rioters were killed.

No lawyer in the city wanted to anger his fellow citizens by defending the soldiers. John Adams was a lawyer who opposed the new taxes. However, he accepted the job

because he believed that every citizen had a right to a fair trial. He felt this included the soldiers who were only following orders. Adams told the jury that the soldiers were endangered by the mob. Therefore, they had a right to shoot in order to defend themselves.

The officer in charge was found innocent. The jury didn't believe he ordered his men to fire on the mob. Adams even got the two soldiers who were found guilty of murder free because of a strange loophole in the law. All he had to prove was that the men could read. He was able to prove this, and they were freed. John Adams went on to become a leader in the struggle for America's freedom from England.

**Check Your Understanding**

- From the context of the passage, what can be inferred about the character of John Adams?
  - He wanted to make money.
  - He was a dedicated and capable lawyer.
  - He wanted people to pay their taxes.
  - He wanted to be a judge.
- Why did John Adams defend the unpopular British soldiers?
  - He received a large fee from the British.
  - He wanted to run for public office.
  - He thought the soldiers were entitled to fire on the citizens.
  - He thought all citizens were entitled to a fair trial.
- Which of the following best describes the meaning of **massacre**?
  - a snowball fight
  - the killing of many people
  - a murder
  - a riot
- Which terms best describe the character and personality of John Adams?
  - honorable and clever
  - devious and mean
  - angry and cruel
  - tricky and cheap





Name \_\_\_\_\_

11

## The Travels of Marco Polo

In 1271, Marco Polo, a seventeen-year-old teenager, traveled with his father and uncle on a journey to China. They went to the court of Kublai Khan. The journey took three and a half years. It was filled with dangers, including bandits and bad weather. The men traveled through blazing hot sand and wild lands. They crossed high mountains and a huge desert. Marco kept careful journals of all that he saw and many of the stories he heard.

After his return, Marco talked to a writer about his journey. He described things people had never seen or heard about. His story was published as *The Travels of Marco Polo*. He described great palaces, rich princes, and things never experienced in Europe. He said that he had seen burning rocks, which we call coal today. He told of oil seeping from the ground. He said it was used for lighting and medicine. He explained the use of paper

money in China long before other nations used this kind of money. Marco explained how the Great Khan kept his empire united under his control by using a fast mail system. Letters and orders were sent by a pony express across the kingdom. Marco talked of gold-covered temples and kings with piles of pearls and rubies. He described the rhinoceros and crocodile among other animals new to Europe. The long-time traveler told many tales of the people he met and their customs.

The Polos were finally allowed to leave China as **ambassadors** for the Khan. They delivered a princess from the Khan as a bride for a king. Many readers thought Marco's stories were made up, but most of the things Marco Polo said he saw have been proven to be true.

### Check Your Understanding

- From the context of the passage, what are **ambassadors**?
  - people who represent a king or a country
  - writers of fairy tales
  - rich men
  - noblemen
- What dangers did the Polos encounter on their trip to China?
  - robbers
  - bad weather and hot deserts
  - high mountains
  - all of the above
- From the context of the passage, what can you infer about the tales Marco told?
  - The stories were entirely made up.
  - Marco Polo was angry at Kublai Khan.
  - The stories told by Marco were very likely true.
  - Marco Polo never went to China.
- Which event occurred first?
  - Marco Polo returned to Venice.
  - Marco traveled over many mountains to reach China.
  - The Polos delivered a princess to a king.
  - Marco kept a journal of his travels.

